

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed on February 27, 2004, the Examiner: (1) objected to the drawings, (2) objected to the Abstract, (3) rejected claims 1 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Depp et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,570,088), (4) rejected claims 2 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Depp et al., and (5) rejected claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Depp et al. in view of Hayakawa et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,915,978).

By this Amendment, Fig. 1 has been amended, a Replacement Abstract has been provided, claim 1 has been amended and new claims 6-10 have been added. For at least the reasons discussed below, Applicants respectfully request that the claim rejections be withdrawn and claims 1-10 be allowed.

With respect to the objection to the drawings, Applicants have amended Fig. 1 to incorporate a "Prior Art" legend, as suggested by the Examiner. Applicants also include a Replacement Sheet and an Annotated Sheet to indicate the amendment to Fig. 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the objection to the drawings.

Concerning the objection to the Abstract, Applicants submit a Replacement Abstract. No new matter has been added. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the objection to the Abstract.

Regarding the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Depp et al., Applicants respectfully submit that Depp et al. does not teach an electrical junction box, including, a junction box body having a maintenance surface; and a cover which houses and holds the junction box body, wherein a guide rail groove is provided on any one of an inner surface of the cover and an outer surface of the

junction box body, and a guide rail guided by the guide rail groove is provided on the other thereof, the guide rail groove is formed so that the inlet side thereof is a wide groove part having a width wider than that of the guide rail, and wherein the guide rail groove is configured to guide the guide rail first in a sliding direction and then at an angle to the sliding direction such that the maintenance surface is oriented in a direction perpendicular to a direction for viewing the maintenance surface of the junction box body.

Depp et al. is directed to a modular junction box assembly. (col. 4, ll. 2-8). In rejecting the pending claims, the Examiner relies on teachings of Depp et al. relating to engaging the shroud 12 and junction box 14 in a snap-fit manner. (See February 27, 2004 Office Action, page 3, paragraph 3). Specifically, according to Depp et al., "the shroud 12 includes a plurality of tab receiving slots 38 and the junction box includes a plurality of alignment tabs 48" (col. 4, ll. 27-32). Depp et al., in describing the tab receiving slots 38, further shows in Figure 4, a tab receiving slot 38 having legs 60 and a tab aperture 62. (col. 4, ll. 40-43, Figure 4).

In contrast, as explained above, claim 1 requires an electrical junction box, including, a junction box body having a maintenance surface, and a cover which houses and holds the junction box body, wherein a guide rail groove is provided on any one of an inner surface of the cover and an outer surface of the junction box body, and a guide rail guided by the guide rail groove is provided on the other thereof, the guide rail groove is formed so that the inlet side thereof is a wide groove part having a width wider than that of the guide rail, and wherein the guide rail groove is configured to guide the guide rail first in a sliding direction and then at an angle to the sliding direction such that

the maintenance surface is oriented in a direction perpendicular to a direction for viewing the maintenance surface of the junction box body. Thus, at least for this reason, Applicants respectfully deem claim 1 allowable.

Claim 4 depends from claim 1 and is thus patentable for at least the reasons given above with respect to claim 1.

Concerning the rejection of claims 2 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Depp et al., Applicants respectfully note that claims 2 and 3 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 1 and thus are patentable for at least the reasons given above with respect to claim 1.

Regarding the rejection of claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Depp et al. in view of Hayakawa et al., Applicants respectfully note that claim 5 depends from claim 1 and thus is patentable for at least the reasons given above with respect to claim 1. Further, Hayakawa et al. also fails to teach the subject matter of claim 1, from which claim 5 depends. In other words, because Hayakawa et al. does not cure the deficiencies of the teachings of Depp et al., even when combined, the two references do not teach or suggest the subject matter of claim 5. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully seek allowance of claim 5.

Applicants respectfully submit that newly added claims 6-10 are also patentable at least because the cited references, alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest an electrical junction box, including a junction box body having a maintenance surface, a cover which houses and holds the junction box body, and a frame coupled to the junction box body, wherein the frame has at least one guide rail configured to engage with at least one guide rail groove in the cover, wherein the at least one guide rail

groove is formed so that the inlet side thereof is a wide groove part having a width wider than that of the at least one guide rail, and wherein the at least one guide rail groove is configured to guide the at least one guide rail first in a sliding direction and then at an angle to the sliding direction such that the maintenance surface is oriented in a direction perpendicular to a direction for viewing the maintenance surface of the junction box body.

The Office Action contains a number of statements reflecting characterizations of the claims and/or the related art. Regardless of whether any such statements are addressed above, Applicants decline to automatically subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

Dated: June 14, 2004

By:


Ranjeev K. Singh
Reg. No. 47,093

Attachments: 1 Replacement Sheet corresponding to Fig. 1
 1 Annotated Sheet showing changes to Fig. 1
 Substitute Abstract

FIG.1
PRIOR ART

